Satriya Dance through financial grants, audio/video documentation of Satriya Dance and allied forms, sponsoring performances, promoting interaction between Satriya artistes and masters of other dance traditions and grant of awards and fellowships. The Akademi has honoured one artist with Akademi Fellowship and nine artists with SNA Awards.

The Centre for Culture Resources and Training (CCRT) has organised lecture demonstrations to explain the evolution, historical background, fundamentals and nuances of Satriya Dance for the benefit of the teachers and student community. They have video documented the Dance form for use in their Training Programme and also prepared color slides and photographs. Scholarships have been awarded to children for Satriya dance under the Cultural Talent Search Scholarship Scheme.

The Government does not have any proposal for setting up a training cum research centre on Satriya Dance at Guwahati, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai or for setting up a separate academy for Satriya Dance, However, SNA proposes to extend support to identified Sattras, Gurus and training institutions in Guwahati under its on going schemes.

There is no system of dance wise financial allocation in these institutions. The expenditure on such activities is incurred under the schemes of the institutions within the over all budget allocation.

The alled forms of Satriya Dance and music including 'Borgeet' have been categorised under the distinct category of Satriya Dance.

Import duty on Soda ash

*62. SHRI GOPAL SINH G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be peased to state:

(a) Whether soda ash attracts a bound rate of 40% as per the norms of World Trade Organisation (WTO);

(b) if so, the reasons for imposing just 20 per cent duty ignoring the standard slabs customs duty; and

(c) whether Government would reconsider the demand of the soda ash industry and revise the duty its earlier level of 35% and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government has fixed the duty at the rate of 20 per cent on soda ash taking into account factors such as the domestic demand-supply position, comparative prices of indigenous and imported soda ash and status and composition of the domestic manufacturing and user industries.

Insurance cover for home loans

*63. SHRIMATI GURCHARAN KAUR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce compulsory insurance cover for home loans being advanced by the banks; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Housing loans upto a limit of Rs.10 lakhs in urban and metropolitan areas and upto Rs. 5 lakhs in rural and semi-urban areas are treated as priority sector advances. As per extant Reserve Bank of India guidelines, under priority sector advances, banks are allowed to waive insurance of assets financed by them upto and exclusive of Rs. 10,000. However, insurance cover in respect of houses financed above Rs.10,000 is compulsory.

Senior citizens' benefit in airlines

*64. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the cases of males and females the age limit for availing of senior citizens' benefit in airlines is 65 and 63 plus respectively;

(b) whether it is also a fact that in the cases of males and females the age limit for availing of senior citizens' benefit in the Indian Railways is 65 and 60 plus respectively;

(c) if so, the reasons for discrimination against the fair sex; and

(d) what steps are being taken to remove the anomaly?